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24. HOUSE SPARROW *PASSER DOMESTICUS* (LINNAEUS) FEEDING ON MOSQUITO LARVAE

I witnessed a house sparrow *Passer domesticus* feeding on mosquito larvae at Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Mosquitoes had bred in an abandoned, rain-water-filled mortar, used for 'wet' grinding of grains and cereals. The sparrow, a cock, would repeatedly fly to the mortar and peck at the larvae massing at the rim of the mortar. The reason for flying away after

each feed was probably to allow the disturbed larvae to surface and regroup once again, making them an easier 'mouthful' of prey for the sparrow. Mosquito larvae are not listed as a food item of the house sparrow.

July 8, 1991

RANJIT MANAKADAN

25. SIND JUNGLE SPARROW *PASSER PYRRHONOTUS* BLYTH IN NORTH-WEST GUJARAT

While birdwatching at the Khari Nadi, c. 3 km west of Bhuj (Kutch), I saw three male and two female Sind jungle sparrows *Passer pyrrhonotus* Blyth on 22 January 1990 and again on the following day. Again I saw three males and one female on 4 August. they were seen in a mixed flock of house

sparrows *Passer domesticus* and weaver birds. However, the last time I saw them they were in good colouration and appeared smaller than house sparrows, so I was more sure about the identification.

November 5, 1990

N.N. BAPAT

26. NESTING BY *PLOCEUS PHILIPPINUS* (LINN.) IN CLUMPS OF *SACCHARUM BENGALENSE* RETZ.

The common baya *Ploceus philippinus* is a species which generally does not favour grassy vegetation for hanging its nest. Abdulali and Ambedkar [1984, *JBNHS* 81(3): 701-703] have reported this species nesting in a patch of grass (*Coix lachrymajobi*) in Thana district, Maharashtra.

Since 1988, an all Rajasthan survey was conducted by me to list the host plants preferred by the three species of weaver birds, viz. *Ploceus philippinus*, *P. benghalensis* and *P. manyar*. During the survey, in the month of August 1989, four yearling cocks of *Ploceus philippinus* were noticed making their 'practice nests' in clumps of *Saccharum ben-*

galense Retz. near village Shyopur in Alwar district. More than a dozen immature males had hung their nests on *Acacia nilotica* close to the patch of *Saccharum*.

All the half built nests present on the *Saccharum* clump contained the usual blobs of mud at the potential points of the egg-chamber of the respective nests. This species rarely appears to nest in reeds. Nowhere in the locality were mature cocks observed nesting in reeds.

February 28, 1991

SATISH K. SHARMA